

The
JOHNGRIFFITH-JONES

• *Large Gold Medal Collection* •

**The Missionary Typewritten & Typeset
Issues of Uganda, 1895-1899**

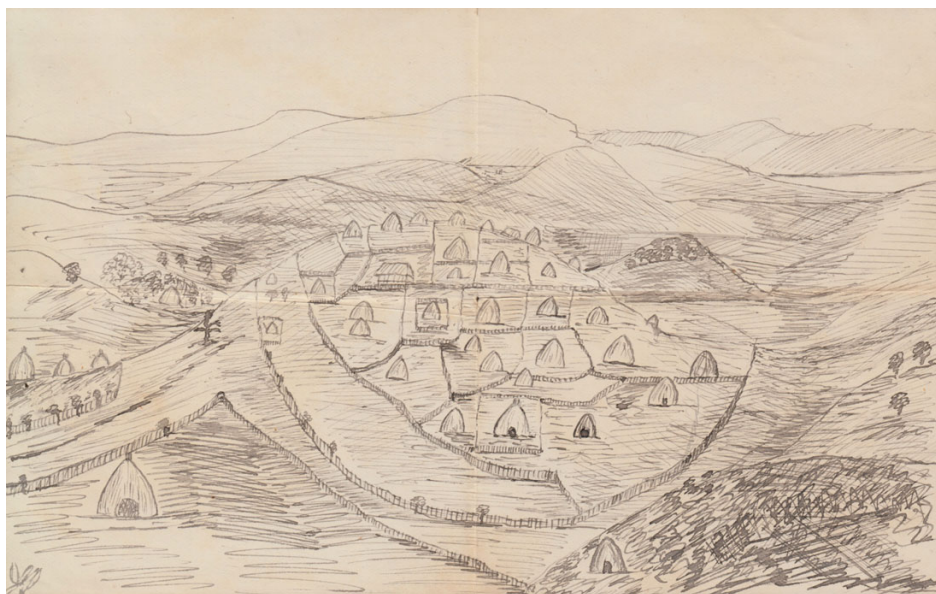
If you have men who will only come if they know there is a good road,
I don't want them. I want men who will come if there is no road at all.

— DAVID LIVINGSTONE

In the 1860s large swaths of the central part of Africa remained unoccupied by European powers, including the area which is now known as Uganda. Other than the native population, the area mainly consisted of Arab traders from the north (Ottoman Empire) and those from the Eastern Coast and Zanzibar. During this time, the Khedive of Egypt sought to extend their grasp and annex the areas along the northern border of Lake Victoria. In 1869 the Khedive sent a military expedition headed by Sir Samuel Baker with the intent to suppress slave trading and pave the way towards opening up commerce to the area. Baker was repelled and was narrowly able to retreat.

With portions of the west coast of Africa claimed by Great Britain, France, Germany, and Portugal, the southern Cape was secured by Britain, the French along the northern coast, and the Ottomans in Egypt. The interior remained a prized possession. British explorers were continuing searching along the Nile, and the Missionaries soon began to arrive in the 1870s. In 1888 the British government chartered the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) to secure trade agreements in the East Africa region. During this time, considerable religious unrest ensued between the Muslim traders, Christian Missionaries and the local population, as well as between Protestant and Catholic followers. These conflicts proved too much for the IBEAC and eventually led to their downfall and ultimately bankruptcy. On June 19, 1894, Uganda became a full Protectorate, which came under the Foreign Office of Great Britain.

It quickly became apparent that mail communication, within the interior and with Great Britain, was fraught with complications and inefficiencies. Government officials relied on their own caravans and runner systems. The missions paid for a caravan system to the coast and had their own runners internally between posts. In March 1895, George Wilson, the Deputy



Mengo, 1889, Sketch by Rev. Robert Walker
Part of Lot 2239

Commissioner of Uganda, spoke with Rev. Ernest Millar regarding a postal system. Extracts directly from Rev. Millar's diary mention that on March 14, 1895, he was asked to print stamps, a request to which he complied. Within days, by March 19, Rev. Millar informed Wilson that the stamps were printed and ready for sale the next day (March 20).

The benefits of improving the postal system and introducing postage stamps were an increase in letter writing and influx of revenue from the sale of stamps. By the 1890s it was estimated that missionary activity expanded the population of literate locals to around 50,000. The residents utilizing the postal service comprised government officials, missionaries (from the Protestant Church Missionary Society and the Catholic White Fathers), literate locals, and traders.

The Ugandan Missionary Stamps and Covers

The Ugandan Missionary stamps, produced by hammering out letters and hyphens on a typewriter, are exceptional for their primitive appearance and use in remote outposts of the British Empire in Africa.

Postal regulations allowed only one letter in each envelope; if the sender attempted to send more than one, the entire cover would be confiscated. Covers without stamps affixed would not be posted. Since Uganda was not yet part of the Universal Postal Union, their stamps were only valid for internal postage. Letters addressed outside of Uganda were sent to the border of British East Africa, and from there they were privately carried to Mombasa for onward transmission by British mail to their final destination.

The survival rate of covers with the Uganda Typewritten Issues is miniscule. Only 24 covers or fronts are recorded, which is not surprising. Uganda was a remote, tropical region, and little interest was shown by the local population in saving stamps on covers. While philatelic interest surged in Great Britain, Europe and the United States in the 1890s, the primary focus was on the stamps, not covers.

As demand for postal service grew, Rev. Millar was unable to maintain adequate production on his typewriter. The First Printing of the Typeset Issue was made on November 7, 1896. This issue also reflected the change in currency from the locally used cowries to annas and rupees.

The mail arrangements and use of Uganda stamps remained in place until 1898, when British East Africa stamps became available in Uganda. Postage on outbound letters still required dual frankings and private carriage to Mombasa. By the end of 1898, the next Definitive issue was received in Uganda, along with circular datestamps. The General Post Office circular dated December 20, 1898, specifically mentions Uganda and British East Africa as members of the Imperial Penny Post system. Mail containing notice of this change took weeks to reach Africa from Great Britain. Enactment of the Imperial Penny Post rates occurred in British East Africa in mid-February 1899 and in March 1899 in Uganda.



John Griffith-Jones, pictured standing at left with Dr. Peter McCann, assembled his collection of Uganda Typewritten and Typeset Issues at an extremely opportune moment in philately. Until the passing of Dr. Gene Scott, who assembled an outstanding collection of these issues, it was impossible to achieve the level of depth and breadth evident in the Griffith-Jones collection. In addition, several key items came to market through auctions and in private sales, allowing Mr. Griffith-Jones to build one of the finest collections of its kind ever formed. The collection has won numerous gold-level awards in international exhibitions, culminating in winning a Large Gold at World Stamp Show-NY 2016.

MISSIONARIES IN EAST AFRICA

Courtesy of Europeans in East Africa (www.europeansineastafrica.co.uk)



Ashburnham (Maj.),
Cromer
1894, Military



Baskerville (Rev.), George
Knyfton
Arr. 1890, CMS



Bird, Gertrude Elizabeth
Arr. 1896, CMS



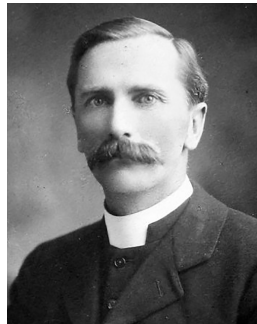
Blackledge (Rev.), George
Robert
Feb. 1895, CMS



Borup, Kristen Eskildsen
1897, CMS



Buckley (Rev.), Thomas
Richard
Jul. 1895, CMS



Clayton (Rev.), Herbert
Oct. 1896, CMS



Cook (MD), Albert Ruskin
Oct. 1896, CMS



Crabtree (Rev.), William
Arthur
Dec. 1892, CMS



Fisher (Rev.), Arthur
Bryan
Dec. 1892, CMS



Fletcher (Rev.), Thomas
Benjamin
Aug. 1893, CMS



Furley, Edith Markham
Apr. 1895, CMS



Hall (Rev.), Martin John
1895, CMS



Hanlon (Rt. Rev. Bishop),
Henry
Jun. 1895, White Father's



Hattersley, Charles William
1897, CMS



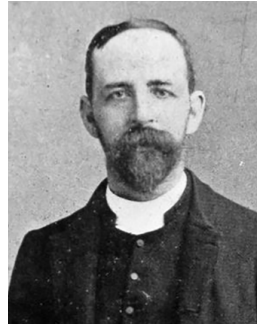
Leakey (Rev.), Richard
Herbert
Sept. 1892, CMS



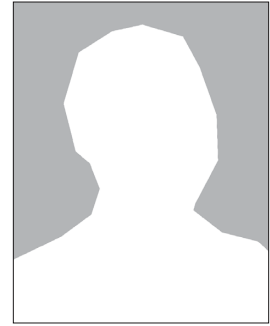
Lewin (Rev.), Harold
Brelsford
Feb. 1895, CMS



Maddox (nee Taylor),
Bertha
Oct. 1896, CMS



Millar (Rev.), Ernest
Dec. 1892, CMS



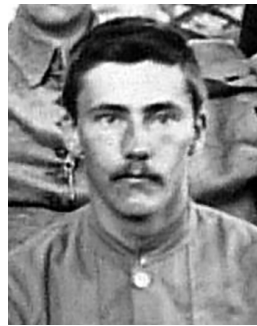
Muxworthy, Edward
George
Jul. 1894, CMS



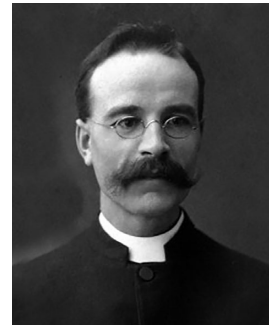
Pike (Rev.), Arthur John
Feb. 1895, CMS



Pilkington (Rev.), George
Lawrence
Jan. 1897, CMS



Purvis (Rev.), John
Bremner
Jul. 1895, CMS



Rowling (Rev.), Frank
Dec. 1893, CMS



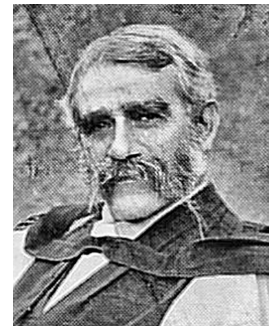
Streicher (Rt. Rev.), Henri
Feb. 1891, White Father's



Sugden, Henry Richard
Aug. 1893, CMS



Thomsett, Mary Susannah
Jul. 1895, CMS



Tucker (Rt. Rev.), Alfred
Robert
Dec. 1890, CMS



Walker (Ven. Archdn),
Robert Henry
Dec. 1890, CMS



Weatherhead (Rev.),
Henry Walter
Oct. 1896, CMS



Wigram, Beresford Edward
Feb. 1897, CMS



Wilson (Rev.), Allen
Jul. 1895, CMS